

**NRFC
WEBINAR**

Understanding the Past to Improve the Future

Lessons Learned in
Fatherhood Program Service Delivery

February 19, 2020





About Us

- HHS/ACF Office of Family Assistance provides funds to support fathers and families through the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse.
- Resources are available for dads, fatherhood programs, researchers, and policy makers.



National
Responsible
Fatherhood Clearinghouse

Contact

Visit the NRFC: fatherhood.gov

- fatherhood.gov/toolkit for *Responsible Fatherhood Toolkit*
- fatherhood.gov/webinars for archives of all our webinars

Contact us: Help@FatherhoodGov.info

Encourage fathers or practitioners to contact our national call center toll-free at:

- **1-877-4DAD411** (877-432-3411)

Engage with us via social media:

- Facebook: @Fatherhoodgov
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Featuring:



Dr. Chance Lewis
[@DrChanceWLewis](https://twitter.com/DrChanceWLewis)
Professor of Urban Education at the
University of North Carolina at Charlotte



Julie Baumgardner
MS, CFLE
[@Julie_FTF](https://twitter.com/Julie_FTF)
President and CEO of
First Things First

Co-Parenting

Putting the Children First

Twitter Chat

Hosted by the National Responsible Fatherhood
Clearinghouse [@fatherhoodgov](https://twitter.com/fatherhoodgov)

Tuesday, February 25, 2020
from 8:30 pm - 9:30 pm EST

Co-Parenting while not easy is extremely important to
ensure the well-being of children.

Follow the chat at [#fatherhoodrocks](https://twitter.com/fatherhoodrocks)



Save the Date!

NRFC WEBINAR

COPARENTING 201

Tips for Fatherhood Programs

**April 22, 2020
2:30–4:00 pm EDT**



Today's Webinar

- NRFC staff presentations on promising practices and lessons learned from our work:
 - **Nigel Vann**, Project Development Lead: *Brief History and Some Early Lessons Learned*
 - **Mindy Scott**, Research Lead: *Findings from Recent and Ongoing Research*
 - **James Worthy**, Outreach Coordinator: *Outreach, Recruitment, and Retention*
 - **Patrick Patterson**, Project Manager: *Partnership Development and Program Sustainability*
 - **Kenneth Braswell**, Project Director: *Development of Fatherhood Field/Future Direction*
- Presenter handouts and list of helpful resources available for download during the webinar.
- "Question and Answer" session at end of the webinar.

If you have time, please stay until 2:45 p.m. EST for an extended Q&A session!

Our Focus Today

- Promising practices identified by research studies and other lessons learned from our work in the field.
- Discussion of development of fatherhood field framed by four broad questions:
 1. What have we done?
 2. What have we learned?
 3. What are we doing based on those lessons?
 4. Where are we going?



Brief History of Fatherhood Work/ Early Lessons Learned

Nigel Vann

NRFC Product Development Lead

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What Have We Done?*

- We know that fathers are essential to the lives of their children.
- Some fathers face challenges that prevent them being positively involved in their children's lives.
- Since the mid-1970s, fatherhood programs have sought to strengthen positive father-child engagement, enhance couple and coparenting relationships, and improve employment opportunities for fathers, particularly non-residential fathers.
- There is a substantial body of work documenting the work of fatherhood programs over the last 30 years and a growing body of publications detailing promising practices.
 - But there is still a need for more rigorous Random Control Trial (RCT) evaluations to clearly link program components or approaches to outcomes.

* Information drawn from Tollestrup (2018) and NRFC Responsible Fatherhood Toolkit: Resources from the Field

Brief History*

- 1983–1985 Teen Father Collaboration
- 1992–1994 Young Unwed Fathers Pilot Project
- 1994–1996 Parents' Fair Share
- 1997–2002 National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families (NPNFF)
- 1998–2000 Responsible Fatherhood Demonstration (Office of Child Support Enforcement)
- 2000–2003 Partners for Fragile Families
- 2006–Present Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (Office of Family Assistance)

*Sample of major projects, for more information see NRFC Responsible Fatherhood Toolkit

Sample of Reports on Early Fatherhood Work*

- **Teen Father Collaboration (Bank Street College of Education)**
Sander, J. H., & Rosen, J. L. (1987). *Teenage fathers: Working with the neglected partner in adolescent childbearing*. Family Planning Perspectives, 19(3), 107-110.
- **Young Unwed Fathers Pilot Project (Public/Private Ventures)**
Achatz, M., & MacAllum, C. (1994). The Young Unwed Fathers Pilot Project.
- **Report on Parents' Fair Share (MDRC)**
Johnson, E. S., Levine, A., & Doolittle, F. C. (1999). *Fathers' fair share: Helping poor men manage child support and fatherhood*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- **Summary of findings from fatherhood projects 1980–2005**
Bronte-Tinkew, J., et al (2007). Elements of promising practice for fatherhood programs.
Martinson, K., & Nightingale, D. (2008). Ten key findings from responsible fatherhood initiatives.

*For additional resources, see Helpful Resources handout, which is available for download during the webinar.

Early Lessons Learned

- Low-income moms and dads face similar and significant barriers.
- Young fathers who participated were more involved in their children's lives than often assumed.
- Fathers will come, but it takes time.
- They will stay, if staff treat them with respect and are able to help them overcome barriers to participation.
- The Parents' Fair Share (PFS) demonstration confirmed that men will take part in peer support groups and identified these groups as the "glue" that kept the fathers involved in the program.
- Some programs needed more support from agency administrators and partner agencies.
- Public policies and other external factors can present barriers to father involvement.
- Program sustainability is a challenge:
 - Many of the early programs were community based and often relied on volunteer efforts.
 - Funding for demonstration projects was time-limited.

Key Program Areas to Focus On

Staff hiring, training, and support

- Include staff who can engage in one-on-one relationships with fathers.

Partnership development

- Work with experienced community partners to help provide a full range of services.

Outreach and recruitment

- Utilize varied recruitment strategies built on knowledge of local community.

Group facilitation

- Select appropriate curricula and provide training and support for group facilitators.

Program Content/Program Outcomes

- Ensure that all necessary services are available, particularly services such as:
 - Employment
 - Child support
 - Coparenting



Recent and Ongoing Research Projects

Mindy Scott

NRFC Research Lead

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Fatherhood Research and Evaluation

Recent

- 2011–2017 Ex-Prisoner Reentry Strategies Study
- 2012–2017 National Child Support Noncustodial Parent Employment Demonstration (CSPED)
- 2014–2019 Behavioral Interventions for Child Support Services Demonstration Program (BICS)

Fatherhood Research and Evaluation

Ongoing

- 2011–2020 Parents and Children Together (PACT)
- 2013–2020 Fatherhood and Marriage Local Evaluation (FaMLE) and Cross-Site Project
- 2014–2021 Building Bridges and Bonds (B3)
- 2017–2020 Engaging Fathers and Paternal Relatives:
A Continuous Quality Improvement Approach in the Child Welfare System
- 2017–2020 Preventing and Addressing Intimate Violence when Engaging Dads (PAIVED)
- 2017–2022 Building Evidence on Employment Strategies for Low-Income Families Project (BEES)
- 2018–2021 Coparenting and Healthy Relationship and Marriage Education for Dads (CHaRMED)
- 2019–2024 Strengthening the Implementation of Responsible Fatherhood Programs (SIRF)

Recent Publications

- Tossed on a Sea of Change: A Status Update on the Responsible Fatherhood Field (Klempin & Mincy, 2012)
- Making Good on Fatherhood: A Review of the Fatherhood Research (Child and Family Research Partnership, 2016)
- Highlights from the CSPED, Characteristics and Final Implementation Reports (OCSE, 2019)
- Parents and Children Together (PACT): Effects of Four Responsible Fatherhood Programs for Low-Income Fathers (2018)
- Implementing an Innovative Parenting Program for Fathers: Findings from the B3 Study (2020)

NRFC Research Briefs:

- Using Documentation and Data in Responsible Fatherhood Programs (2013)
- Forging Effective Responsible Fatherhood Partnerships: A Research-to-Practice Brief (2012)
- Recruiting and Retaining Men in Responsible Fatherhood Programs: A Research-to-Practice Brief (2012)

What Have We Learned from Research and Evaluation?

Staff Hiring, Training, and Support

- Integrate staff from partner agencies.
- Train staff in trauma awareness and appropriate responses to signs of trauma.

Partnership Development

- Consider providing partner services “in-house.”
- Partnerships can help programs connect fathers to services that may not be supported by certain funding sources.

Outreach and Recruitment

- Invest time and resources to get fathers in the door.
- Stay in close communication with fathers to support their ongoing participation.
- Use flexible, creative, and adaptive approaches to support implementation.



What Have We Learned from Research and Evaluation? (cont.)

Group Facilitation

- Emphasize personal development as part of workshop sessions.
- Employ staff with similar backgrounds to participants.

Program Content/Program Outcomes

- Fatherhood programs can improve/increase fathers':
 - Nurturing behaviors
 - Engagement with their children
 - Employment stability
 - Earnings
 - Satisfaction with child support program



Outreach, Recruitment, and Retention

James Worthy

NRFC Outreach Lead

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What Have We Done?

Early efforts to get dads involved

- Reaction to change in family structure
- Attempt to get dads to pay for “abandoned” children
- Driving force = financial support methods were often punitive:
 - Social Services
 - WIC
 - Child Support

Responsible Fatherhood movement began with efforts to:

- Encourage and support fathers
- Assist in removing barriers, with understanding of what was driving family structure changes

What Have We Learned?*

- Paradigm shift
- From punitive to supportive
 - Abandonment to absentee
- Deadbeat vs. Deadbroke
 - Two sides of the story
 - Collection verses encouragement
- Program development for barrier removal and support
 - Meet dads where they are
 - Develop rapport and invite to participate
 - Provide services (WIIFM – "what's in it for me?")
 - Be flexible and adaptive
 - Recruit with retention in mind

*NRFC Responsible Fatherhood Toolkit (NOTE: the toolkit draws on lessons learned by experienced practitioners, not rigorous research findings).

What Have We Learned?*

MARKETING

Is the widespread distribution of information about your program. The intent is to bring awareness to the general population or audience.

OUTREACH

Is communicating directly with the general public. This is where you define how they fit into your program awareness campaign: as a Prospect, Supporter, or Referral source.

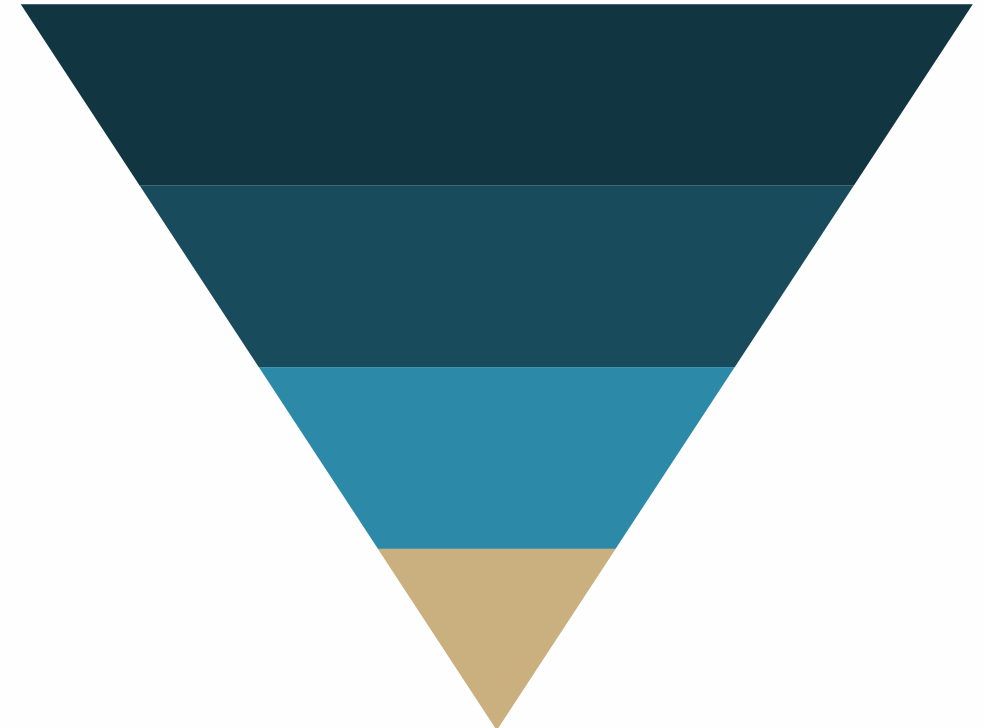
ENGAGEMENT

Is presenting your benefits to the different categories you defined in outreach and inviting them to participate in the program.

ENROLLMENT

Is getting your defined Prospects to commit to participating in the program.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

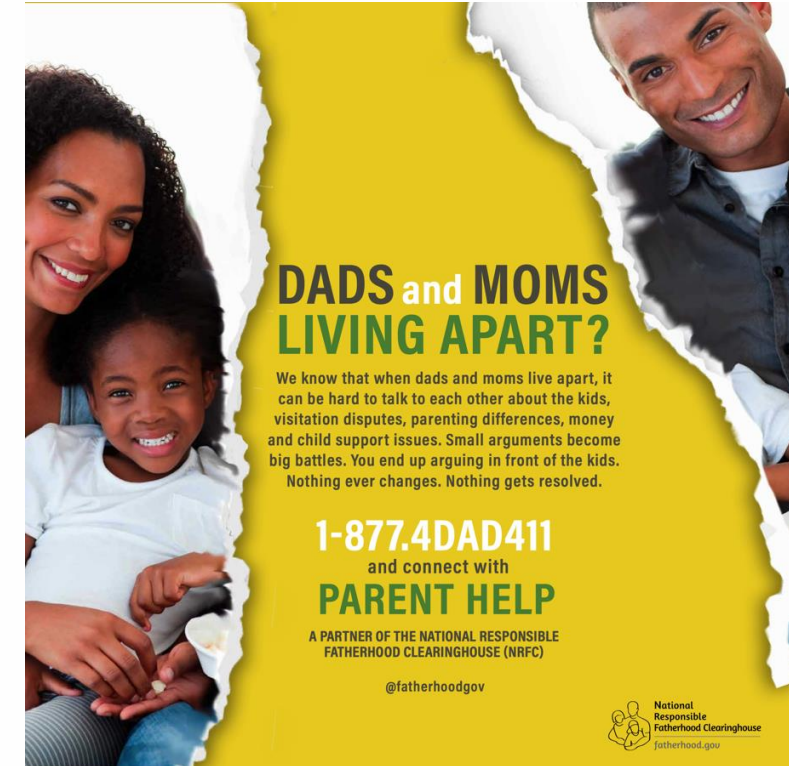


*NRFC Responsible Fatherhood Toolkit (NOTE: the toolkit draws on lessons learned by experienced practitioners, not rigorous research findings).

What Are We Doing Based on Lessons Learned?

Expanding the message and scaling the process

- Marketing materials intended for dads
 - Brochures/Flyers
 - Radio/Print/TV mass messaging
 - Using outlets where dads are
 - Social Media Communications



What Are We Doing Based on Lessons Learned?

(cont.)

- Creating father-friendly environment
 - Adapting traditional services locations to include dads
- Training staff in providing services to fathers
 - National hotlines intended for dads
 - National data base of programs for dads
 - National support for the training and support of programs and staffs



Partnership Development and Program Sustainability

Patrick J. Patterson, MSW, MPH

NRFC Project Manager

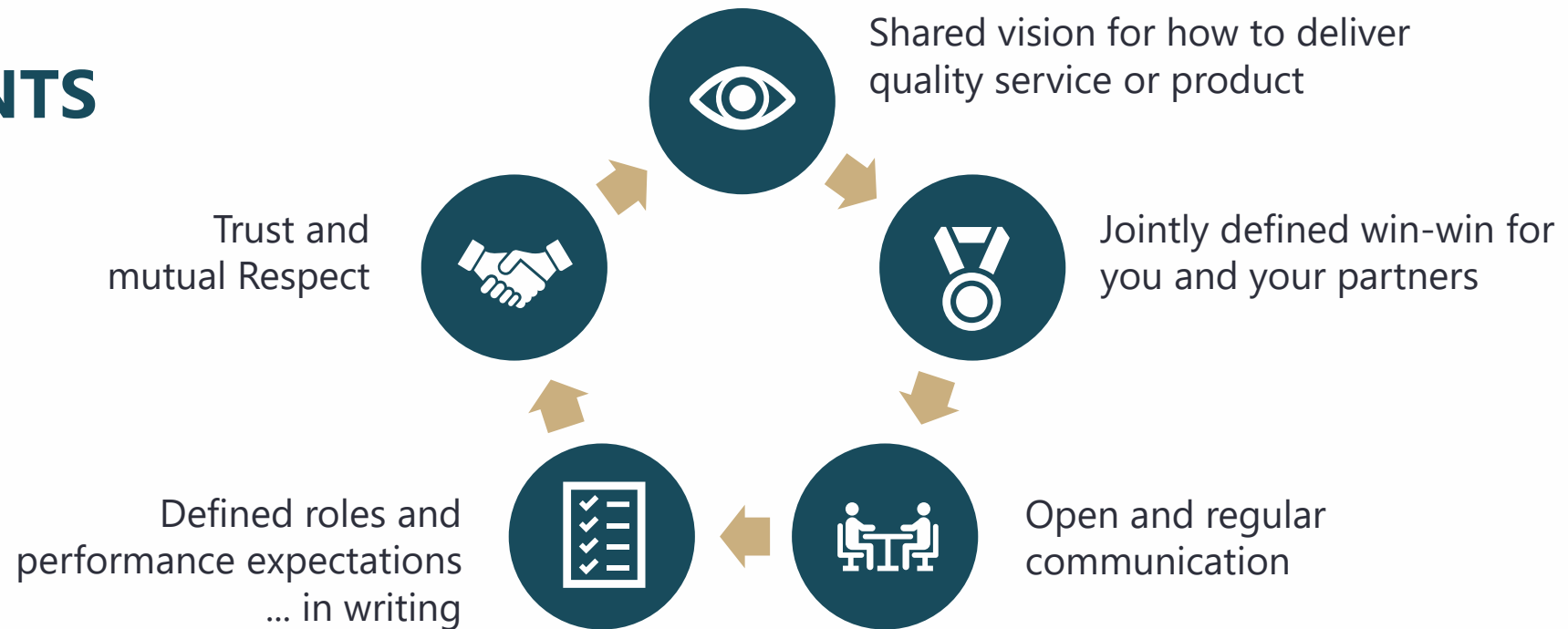
patrick.patterson@icf.com

NRFC Partnerships



Partnerships

KEY ELEMENTS



Program Sustainability

4 Lessons

1. Research funders prior to contact
2. Develop fundraising target and plan
3. Not a job for one person
4. Apply (50% vs. 0% rule)





Development of Fatherhood Field/ Lessons Learned for Fatherhood Leaders

Kenneth Braswell

NRFC Project Director

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Development of the Fatherhood Field

- Over the last 30 years, the “quilt” of the fatherhood field has grown and diversified.
- One of the functions of the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse is to help connect and enhance the various threads of the work.
 - We provide information, based on research and practice, to support the continued growth of the field.



Program Leadership*

- Successful programs often have key staff members with a deep passion for the work, and a champion who can overcome initial barriers and forge strategic alliances in the community.
- The right hiring decisions are essential.
 - Employees should have flexibility, listening skills, life experience, ability to serve as positive role models, and sensitivity to the needs of men and fathers.

*NRFC Responsible Fatherhood Toolkit (NOTE: the toolkit draws on lessons learned by experienced practitioners, not rigorous research findings).

Program Leadership

There is a **DIFFERENCE** between:

Fatherhood Organizations

- Fatherhood → Primary Mission



Fatherhood Programs

- Fatherhood services are one of multiple program offerings in a larger organization.

Program Leadership*

- The quality of one-on-one interaction and case management can affect:
 - Whether a father decides to join a program.
 - How long he stays.
 - Whether he follows through in achieving his goals.
- Well facilitated workshops can generate tremendous positive energy and influence retention.
- Providing meaningful services will increase retention and can become a key recruitment tool through word-of-mouth marketing.

*NRFC Responsible Fatherhood Toolkit (NOTE: the toolkit draws on lessons learned by experienced practitioners, not rigorous research findings).

Staff Training and Support*

- Ensure all new staff receive thorough training in program principles, methods, and goals.
- Provide ongoing training and support to:
 - Reinforce direct service skills.
 - Help staff members deal with difficult issues.
 - Ensure they understand program policies, procedures, and strategies.
- Help staff stay motivated and focused.
 - Remind them to apply and model key program concepts, such as good relationship skills.
- Nurture new and experienced staff to prevent potential burnout.
 - A team approach and reflective supervision are good ways to do this.

*NRFC Responsible Fatherhood Toolkit (NOTE: the toolkit draws on lessons learned by experienced practitioners, not rigorous research findings).

Q&A

Please submit your questions in the Q&A box at the bottom-right of your screen.



The Road Ahead



The Road Ahead (Kenny)

- No need to reinvent the wheel.
 - Although we need more evidence-based research, we do have good ideas of ways to build and maintain programs that help fathers.
- Encouraging to see infusion of new blood in fatherhood field.
 - But need to figure out how to carry older generation's work forward after they retire.
- Need consistent funding sources.
 - State funding, such as available through TANF and Child Support, could be key.
- Invite new folk to the field to help complete our fatherhood quilt.
 - All family focused services should be engaging and serving fathers.
- Time to revisit National Practitioner Network for Fathers and Families (NPNFF) model for a member-driven practitioner organization?
- The NRFC will continue to help map the way forward, particularly with use of technology.
 - Later this year, we will launch our new Virtual Collaborative Community.

The Road Ahead

Research and Evaluation* (Mindy)

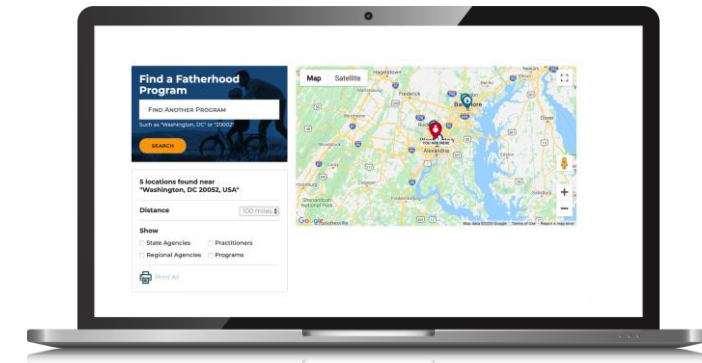
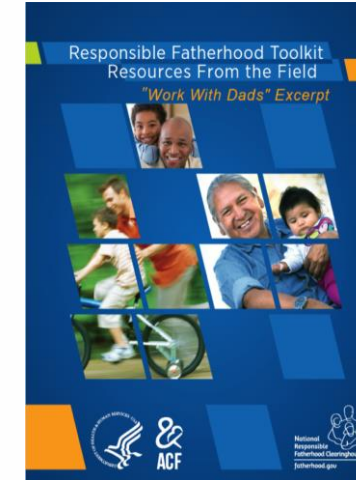
- **Conduct** rigorous research to inform fatherhood program design and implementation.
- **Continue** to build evidence to innovate and improve programs for fathers.
- **Conduct** research to understand fathers' risks for poverty, social isolation, violence, and other experiences that may harm families.
 - **Include** research that looks at different types of fathers and families.
- **Conduct** research and evaluation that emphasizes and builds on the strengths of fathers in addition to considering the challenges.
- **Make** data meaningful for fatherhood programs and communities.
- **Build** research and evaluation capacity.

*Recommendations informed by *Family Strengthening Research (FY2018)*, OPRE Report #2019-34, Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The Road Ahead (James)

Wide-reaching resources: Use of technology

- Networks of national messaging that change the image and narrative of fathers.
- Social media communities of resources for dads to access.
 - Mass marketing campaigns that tell the story of positive responsible fathers.
- International movement connecting mainstream media and grassroots efforts to lift the voice of dads.



The Road Ahead (Patrick)

- Diversity of corporate funding is key to program development and sustainability.
- Programs should look to diversify funding sources beyond traditional government or foundation grants.
 - Funders
 - Individual donors
 - Annual fundraisers

The Road Ahead for Practitioners (Nigel)

- The effectiveness of four key program components can make a big difference in program outcomes:
 - Staff training and support, Partnership development, Outreach and recruitment, Group facilitation.
- Continue to learn from previous work and successful programs.
- Draw on tips and activities in NRFC's Toolkit.
- Develop relationships of trust and respect — with fathers, with funders, with researchers, with partners, and with colleagues.
- Create a supportive environment for staff.
- Walk the talk, model respectful behavior.
- Help dads reflect on their personal journeys, gain knowledge, and develop skills to improve outcomes for their children.

Quick Note on Effective Group Facilitation*

EFFECTIVE FACILITATORS

- Create an environment of mutual learning and respect.
- Help people come to their own conclusions.
- Offer varied activities.
- Respond to individual group member needs.
- Listen to and learn from the group.
- Manage difficult people.

GENERAL FACILITATION SKILLS

- Listening, observing & learning
- Being authentic
- Involving the whole group
- Asking good open-ended questions
- Keeping things moving/having back-up plans
- Using self-disclosure appropriately
- Being flexible

*For more information, see NRFC Toolkit and Facilitation Tip Card

Sample of NRFC Resources

TOOLKIT

- Responsible Fatherhood Toolkit: Resources from the Field

INFORMATION BRIEFS

- Recruiting and Retaining Men in Responsible Fatherhood Programs
- Program Sustainability
- Forging Effective Responsible Fatherhood Partnerships

TIP CARDS FOR FATHERHOOD PRACTITIONERS

- Building Effective Partnerships
- Group Facilitation
- Program Attendance and Retention
- Recruitment

Final Thoughts



Today's Presenters



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- Help@FatherhoodGov.info
- Comments, questions, suggestions for future webinar topics, information or resources that you recommend.

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